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# Madras Message on The Faith

A Study based on the Statement  
of Faith by the International  
Missionary Council at Madras in 1938.

by

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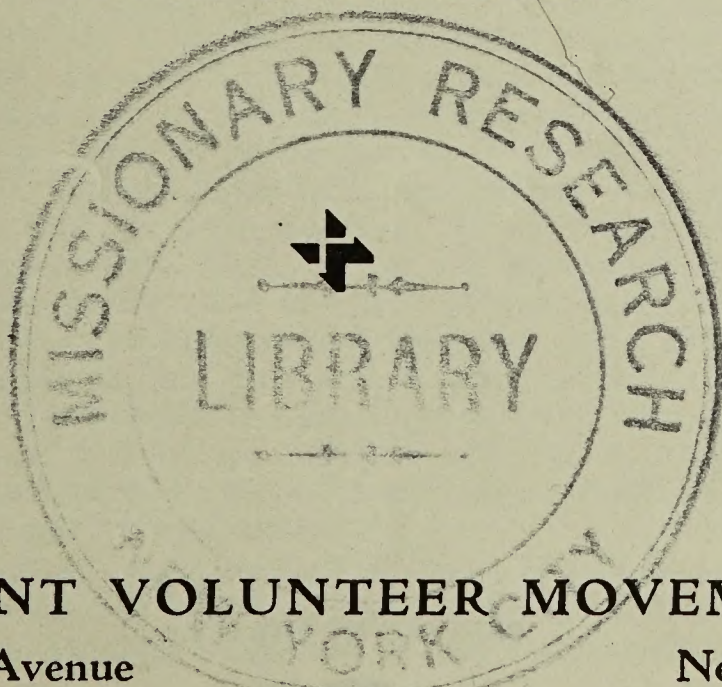
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**STUDENT VOLUNTEER MOVEMENT**

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# THE FAITH BY WHICH THE CHURCH LIVES

*Excerpt from Report of Section I of the Madras Meeting of the*

INTERNATIONAL MISSIONARY COUNCIL

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“WHAT then is the Church’s faith, not in its whole range and depth, but in its special meaning for our time?

“We live by faith in God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.

“Above all and in all and through all is the Holy Will, the Creative Purpose, of the Most High. The world is His and He made it. The confusions of history are in the grasp of His manifold Wisdom. He overrules and works through the purposes of men, bringing to nought their stubborn and rebellious lust for power but building their fidelity into the structure of His Reign upon earth.

“Man is the child of God, made in His image. God has designed him for life in fellowship with Himself, and with his brothers in the family of God on earth. Yet in the mystery of the freedom which God has given him, man chooses to walk other paths, to seek other ends. He defies his Father’s will. He seeks to be a law unto himself. This is the deepest cause of the evil and misery of his life. Alienated from God he seeks his salvation where it cannot be found. Impotent to save himself, he stands ever in need of conversion, of forgiveness, of regeneration.

“Who then shall save? God saves, through Jesus Christ our Lord. ‘God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son that whosoever believeth on Him should not perish but have everlasting life.’ This is the heart of the Christian Gospel, the Gospel which we proclaim.

“God in His infinite love has acted for men’s salvation. He has come among them in Jesus of Nazareth, His Word made flesh. In Him, He has conquered the power of sin and death. Jesus Christ in His teachings and life of perfect love recalls men to that which God would have them be, and brings them to shame for their betrayal of His expectation. Through His faith and perfect obedience they come to trust the only true God. His suffering and death on Calvary bring them to see the exceeding sinfulness of sin and assure them of God’s pardon. His resurrection is the victory of holiness and love over death and corruption. Through His risen and living Presence, men who dedicate their wills to Him become with Him partakers of eternal life. In the strength and joy of forgiveness, daily renewed at the foot of the Cross, they are made more than conquerors over every evil.

“For Christ, the Kingdom of God was central. He called His followers to seek first God’s Kingdom and His righteousness. Through acceptance of His call to suffering love



and through trust in divine help, men are summoned to be co-workers with Him for the increase of justice, truth and brotherhood upon earth. His Kingdom is both within and beyond this world. It will be consummated in the final establishment of His glorious reign of Love and Righteousness, when there shall be a new heaven and a new earth where death and sin shall be no more.

"To the gift of Christ, God has added the gift of His Holy Spirit in the Church. Christ's true Church is the fellowship of those whom God has called out of darkness into His marvelous light. The guidance and power of the Spirit are given to this Church that it may continue Christ's saving work in the world. It seeks to build up its own members in the Knowledge of Christ, challenging them anew with the message of His redeeming love, comforting them with the assurance of God's forgiveness in Him, teaching them the way of love through service for their brethren in Christ.

"For those that are without Christ the true Church yearns with the love of its Master and Lord. It goes forth to them with the evangel of His grace. It practices His ministry of compassion and healing. It bears witness against every iniquity and injustice in their common life. It bears their sorrows and heartache on its prayers. To it is given the solemn privilege of entering into the fellowship of the sufferings of Christ.

"In spite of all the weakness and shortcomings of our churches, Christ's true Church is within them; and our hope for the redemption of mankind centers in His work through them. Through the nurture and discipline of the Church, Christian life comes to completion; in glad service within the fellowship of the Church, Christian devotion is perfected.

"If the Church is to repossess this its faith in all its uniqueness and adequacy and power, one indispensable thing demanding special emphasis today is the continuous nourishing of its life upon the Bible. We are bold therefore to summon all Christians to a deeper and more consistent study of the Bible, instructor and sustainer of the Christian faith through the ages. Only as, in its light, they seek together in prayer and meditation the guidance of the Holy Spirit, will they be able to fulfil their calling amidst the confusion and unbelief of this age."

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This report is extracted from "The World Mission of the Church," the findings and recommendations of the International Missionary Council, at Madras, India, December 1938, which contains the full text of all the reports and resolutions adopted by the Madras Meeting. This 173 page book can be secured from the Student Volunteer Movement.



## FOREWORD

### WHY STUDY THE MADRAS STATEMENT OF FAITH

Why bother about creeds and doctrines? Is it not sufficient to declare one's faith in Jesus Christ through membership in the Church and willingness to live decent and useful lives? Such is the temper of many Church members today and yet for all of us there are questions arising out of the nature of our traditions, the common observances of our Church communities, the separation of Christian people, the unjust suffering and insecurity of multitudes, the meaning of life, the true goals of existence, the reality and character of God — questions which persist in our minds and demand some reasonable answer. We are helped by those who are willing and able to share their thought and experience with us in such terms as are intelligible and relevant for us.

It is just this which Madras has attempted to do. Ah, but you say the terms are not intelligible and one cannot see any relevance to the real needs of the world. These are the dust-covered phrases and concepts of an ancient time and of other people than ourselves. Can we not speak of these things in the ordinary everyday language of sincere men and women? The answer is, come think with us. Convert our language if you will, but let us disclose to one another that which we know and acknowledge as the center and goal of our lives.

We have before us the answer of Madras to the question, "What is the Church's Faith in its special meaning for our time?" A thoughtful study of the statement should give us a clearer understanding of the faith of the Church of Christ in the world today and should enable us to see ourselves, our own religious experience and our society in the perspective of the Christian heritage as it finds expression in ecumenical Christianity today.



# INTRODUCTION

## *"The Faith by Which the Church Lives"*

### HOW IT WAS WRITTEN

On the morning of December 13th, 1938, fifty-one men and women gathered in one of the spacious and airy classrooms on the beautiful campus of the Madras Christian College. They represented twenty-five nations and almost every conceivable variety of background and viewpoint—cultural, political and religious. Their assignment was to draft a summary of the faith by which the Christian Church lives which should voice the convictions of the four hundred and seventy delegates to the Madras world missionary conference. For this task there were available parts of five days totalling about twenty hours.

This was not the first time in recent years such an attempt had been made. In 1927 at Lausanne, a very distinguished body of Christian theologians had formulated an authoritative summary of Christian faith. The following year at Jerusalem, this had been embodied in a somewhat fuller "Message" to the Christian Churches. Again in 1937 at Oxford and Edinburgh, bodies of weighty Christian scholars had prepared statements on various aspects of the faith and its bearing upon contemporary issues. There was no need to duplicate their labors. Moreover, those who assembled at Madras differed from earlier world Christian gatherings in three respects. They were far more widely representative; Christians not only from Europe and North America but from Asia, Africa, Latin America and the Pacific Islands were present in roughly equal numbers; inevitably, diversity in experience and viewpoint was correspondingly increased. They were less expert in the intricacies of theological formulation; among them were a number of competent theologians, but most of them were practical leaders, closer to the life of their churches but farther



removed from academic pursuits; and they were much younger, averaging barely forty years of age. They met under the immediate shadow of catastrophic world events which had already cast one continent into the throes of a major war and was even then threatening to embroil virtually the whole of mankind. Therefore, it was decided that their statement should attempt to summarize the Church's faith "not in its whole range and depth, but in its special meaning for our time," and that it should aim to speak the language of the rank and file leadership of the churches.

The first step was to become acquainted with one another. Then, with the distinctive viewpoints and problems of the various churches. This was accomplished through informal, intimate reports of the major issues confronting Christian faith in every corner of the world. Facing those problems, the Section went on to discover the points which must find place in the statement to be drafted. An outline was formulated. It early appeared that the document must break into two parts—a positive declaration of the faith, and a discussion of its relation to the most powerful alternative faiths, Nationalism, Communism, Scientific Scepticism as well as other religions. Subsequently it was decided to embody within the first part an even briefer summary (quoted above). What the Section desired to be said in each of these areas was agreed upon. Then the task of composition was entrusted to a drafting committee.

The drafting committee numbered twelve, drawn from ten countries on four continents. Upon it fell major responsibility for whipping the statement into shape. Two alternative methods were possible. The task of writing could be committed to one member with the others serving as critics—the resulting document inevitably bears clearly the marks of its author). This is the usual procedure; it had been followed at Jerusalem and at Oxford. Or, an attempt could be made at a genuinely composite docu-



ment in whose preparation all members of the committee should share. This method is more difficult and precarious, but it offers larger promise of a statement which reflects the best wisdom of every participant. The latter procedure was determined upon. Five members of the drafting committee, writing to the outline which had been formulated by the entire Section, each prepared a full draft. These were rigorously scrutinized by the whole drafting committee, and then committed with instructions to another member to be woven into a unified statement. This again was torn to shreds and parts of it were handed to different members for redrafting. The resulting segments of the statement, still in tentative form, were then examined by the entire Section and returned to the drafting committee for refinement and improvement. Much the same procedure was followed again. At last, the statement came before the entire Conference for consideration, was criticized in detail both in open session and privately, and was returned once more to the drafting committee for complete overhauling in light of the judgments of the whole body. At this late stage, once more, not only every paragraph but every sentence and phrase was subjected to meticulous re-examination and, in many instances, reformulation. Finally, an editorial committee of those who had not participated in the Section put finishing touches on the document as it appears above.

The difficulties in the preparation of such a statement are almost inconceivably great. In the first place, only those who have participated in ecumenical conferences can have any appreciation of the wide diversities and gulfs between Christians of different traditions and areas. In advance, many believed it would be quite beyond possibility to reach agreement on a summary of the Church's faith. Yet the outline of the Statement was arrived at with comparative ease; the Section was nearly of one mind as to what most demanded saying. Then



came the difficulties of precise formulation. Here differences in the phrasing of a common belief are most harassing. Inevitably, the result completely pleases no one. Perhaps the greatest difficulties, however, proceed not from vital divergences of conviction or speech, but from sheer pressure of time. Only parts of four days could be devoted to initial formulation. During the week when the major drafting and revision were carried on, every member of the drafting committee was serving actively with another Section on an entirely different topic. Most of the labor fell in the late or early hours of days crowded with mounting pressure of work; and daily the "deadline" lowered more imminently. There was no leisure for relaxed reconsideration, and no possibility of beginning afresh.

In such circumstances, ecumenical declarations like this one come to be. It is not the product of one mind, or of two or three. Phrases and sentences and paragraphs from no less than ten pens have been woven together into a fabric of united affirmation so that no one could now disentangle the individual threads. The whole has been submitted to repeated re-examination and reformulation under the exacting scrutiny of close to five hundred minds. If the structure and sequence appear conventional rather than original, they accurately reflect what a body of world Christians, starting absolutely *de novo*, most desired to say. If the phrasing at points seems strange or formal, it must speak the conviction of Christians of every race and type. While no one of them alone would have wished the document to be precisely as it is, it may be stated that there is not a single phrase—or even word—which has escaped rigorous criticism and the precise reason for which could not be given.

H.P.V.D.



## HOW TO STUDY THIS STATEMENT OF FAITH

A. Dig deep into your own experience and that of others as you examine this statement. It cannot be proved by argument or speculation. The only real proof or dis-proof lies in the witness of experience which necessitates genuine understanding.

B. Since this statement of faith was itself the product of corporate thought, the study of it may prove more rewarding if it be undertaken by groups the members of which will bring to the study the results of their own individual thinking. If possible, include in the study group people of different Christian traditions and convictions.

C. Question your own answers. Doubt may be the most convenient and respectable refuge from honest mental activity; the easy prey of half-truths or blindness, prejudice and lack of courage to face the facts. On the other hand, it may lead to honest inquiry into the nature of truth.

D. Re-write the statement in your own words, as your study progresses. Compile a statement which represents the experience and careful thought of the group.

In his book *Christian Faith and Democracy*, Gregory Vlastos says, "Faith is the supreme evidence of the mature religious attitude towards reality. It means humility and trust; the open, defenceless, adventurous spirit that braves necessary perils in order to explore unknown possibilities." We venture to suggest that something of this faith is a prerequisite for this study if it is to prove an experience of genuine worth. Certainly, something more or other than cold, objective reason is necessary. For the intention and truth of the statement can be recognized only if it be regarded as a friendly communication which presupposes sympathy, desire to understand, eagerness to know the truth and willingness to accept it.



## STUDY I.

*We live by faith in God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.*

ONE who is accustomed to chemical equations, biological charts and academic sociology may feel that these phrases, familiar though they be, are vague and difficult of practical application. Yet in these words persons around the world who devote themselves to human betterment express their basic motives and common purposes. *We* assumes the Christian community for which the men and women at Madras were spokesmen. William Adams Brown illuminates the meaning of "the Christian community" in the following way:

Beneath the outward divisions and misunderstandings which separate different bodies of Christians, there is a common religious experience which is shared by all whose lives are lived under the influence of the Master, and which unites in sympathy, labor, and prayer, good men in every branch of the church. It is this common religious life, uniting in spiritual fellowship men of different ecclesiastical names and of none, which is the real foundation of the unity of the church.<sup>1</sup>

Live by? Surely, we do not refer to the mere continuance of existence, but the term "live" means to make decisions, to have dealings with other people and things, to develop habits of thought and action and to communicate one's life to others through language and other symbols or forms of expression. To live by a given faith is to modify these functions according to the implications of that faith.

Professor Macintosh defines faith as willed responsiveness to God.

It involves trusting God; it is venturing to go ahead with one's own part in the process, counting upon God for adequate grace and power for the fulfilment of the duty before us.<sup>2</sup>

It is important that from the beginning this statement affirms God as the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. The

1. William Adams Brown, *Christian Theology in Outline*, p. 59.

2. Douglas Clyde Macintosh, *Theology as an Empirical Science*, p. 144.



distinctive feature in the Christian conception of God is the conviction that the character and purpose of God are Christlike.

This had its origin in the impression made upon the disciples by contact with Jesus. He declared himself the son of the heavenly Father, and lived in consciousness of daily communion with him. Hence the attributes which, in common with the old Testament saints, he ascribed to God, received new meaning in the light of his own character and life. The disciples saw God revealed in Christ, and the conviction gave definiteness and certainty to their thought of God. In Jesus the far-off God had drawn near. He that had seen him had seen the Father.<sup>3</sup>

Jesus Christ has revealed what God is and what man may become. It is the Christian conviction that the fullest and highest life possible for men can only be known through the complete giving of the self to God through loving loyalty and obedience to Jesus Christ.

*Questions:*

1. How can we know God?
2. What is the relation of faith to knowledge and experience?
3. In the matter of faith what is the relative importance of doing and of belief?
4. What are the hindrances to faith?
5. Is it possible for a militarist and a pacifist to live by faith in God the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ?

## STUDY II.

*Above all and in all and through all is the Holy Will, the Creative Purpose, of the Most High. The world is His and He made it. The confusions of history are in the grasp of His manifold Wisdom. He overrules and works through the purposes of men, bringing to naught their stubborn and rebellious lust for power but building their fidelity into the structure of His Reign upon earth.*

THIS is amazing optimism for us who live in a world described thus by Pierre Van Paassen:

This is to me the agony of life that I am a member of a society, an integral part of a social order, in which the

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3. Brown, *op. cit.*, p. 87.



most flagrant injustice, the most inhuman exploitation, the most barbaric practises not only occur, but are accepted as normal. But life would be unbearable if I should think this "normality" the law of Nature or the will of God and life therefore a chaotic, purposeless tumult instead of an eternal orderly process.<sup>4</sup>

The same author continues to say:

The apparent triumph of evil in a historical period such as ours is not a mere accidental, unrelated phenomenon. Precisely because there is violence and oppression and hatred, there is a divine order and not chaos. Effect follows cause with inexorable accuracy. God's mill, the divine law, operates with relentless precision. When the fundamental law of nature, which is coherence and respect and brotherhood, is trodden underfoot, no other result can be expected but confusion and hatred and war.<sup>5</sup>

If this be God's world then surely His purpose for it and for us is good. His creative task is not ended nor has he withdrawn His hand. We are confused, frustrated, defeated in our efforts to order and control our lives, but God's resources, which are evidenced on every hand are not exhausted. When we abandon our self-made schemes and hopes and give ourselves humbly, yet enthusiastically, to the well-being of mankind we know that His purposes are being fulfilled through us and his reign established. But when indifferent to God's will we follow "the desires of our own hearts" we bring upon ourselves, and others, the inevitable burden of defeat and punishment. By his pride and foolish wilfulness man not only postpones but makes costly to himself in blood and tears the realization of God's will upon earth.

The following passages from Emil Brunner illumine the thought of this division of our study:

You want God, because without Him life is nonsense. Your own heart distinguishes between sense and nonsense; it knows that sense is right. Your heart knows something of God already. You wish that there might be a God, for otherwise everything is ultimately the same—evil is not evil, good is not good. You know already that there is a

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4. Pierre Van Paassen, *Days of Our Years*, p. 501.

5. *Ibid.*, p. 501.



God, for you know that good cannot possibly be the same as evil.

Not only the heart within, but the world without also testifies of God. I have never known chance to create order, so that the meaningful and beautiful arise out of mere chance. . . . The rock cairn which the wanderer sees on a mountain peak—not chance, but a hand has laid these rocks one upon the other. Yet a million times more beautiful than such a stone heap is the retina of the eye. It is truly no evidence of intelligence to miss anything so obvious.<sup>6</sup>

*Questions:*

1. Does it make any difference for our lives if we believe this to be God's world?
2. How does one reconcile God's omnipotence with man's freedom?
3. How has the idea of evolution affected the Christian idea of creation?
4. In what sense is the method of God in history a democratic method?
5. On what basis does the Christian claim that the "confusions of history are in the grasp of God's manifold wisdom?"

### STUDY III.

*Man is the child of God, made in His image. God has designed him for life in fellowship with Himself, and with his brothers in the family of God on earth. Yet in the mystery of the freedom which God has given him, man chooses to walk other paths, to seek other ends. He defies his Father's will. He seeks to be a law unto himself. This is the deepest cause of the evil and misery of his life. Alienated from God he seeks his salvation where it cannot be found. Impotent to save himself, he stands ever in need of conversion, of forgiveness, of regeneration.*

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MAN alone of all created beings is capable of an awareness of God, knowledge of him and response to him. Man also has the freedom to obey or disobey what he understands of God. All other creatures obey of necessity.

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6. Emil Brunner, *Our Faith*, p. 3.



Why has the expression, "made in His image" originating in the ancient creation story (Genesis 1:26-27) so survived changes in religious thought that a contemporary world-wide conference of Christian religious thinkers has ratified it? It must carry a valuable significance. Perhaps men have used it in an effort to attain some tangible mental picture of the Deity—something vaguely man-like. However, today the expression has no physical implications, but suggests that man differs from all the rest of creation in the possession of self-conscious personality; in this he alone of all creatures resembles God.

A study of the evidences of the relation of man and God is revealing as to the character of both God and man. For every effect one would expect adequate cause. If life and man's complex personality—with the appreciation of the aesthetic, his discernment between good and evil, and his capacity for love and sacrifice—are the work of a Creator, what does that imply about the nature of the Creator? If man is truly the child of his Maker, is not his life then creative in nature and purpose?

When a man enjoys a painting he does not perceive daubs of pigment on canvas, but an idea of beauty or feeling expressed by the artist. Would the painting carry meaning to him unless he and the artist were of like emotional constitution and experience background? Perhaps, then our capacity to be held breathless by a purple and gold sunset in the mountains suggests to us something of our relation to God.

There is a sense in which this thought of man's creation in the image of God points forward too; the fullness of its meaning is in the future. "It is not some past innocence of paradise, not some imagined perfection of being before the fall; it is the high end that is to be



achieved. We are to be children of our Father in heaven, we are to grow up in Him who is our head. . . .”<sup>7</sup>

Some people have discovered that life is truly good when lived in cooperation and harmony with the purpose of God and with the members of the community of which they are a part. The preacher in the *Grapes of Wrath* described cooperation in the following way:

I got to thinkin' how we was holy when we was one thing, an' mankin' was holy when it was one thing. An' it on'y got unholy when one mis'able little fella got the bit in his teeth an' run off his own way, kickin' an' draggin' an' fightin'. Fella like that bust the holiness. But when they're all workin' together, not one fella for another fella, but one fella kind of harnessed to the whole shebang—that's right, that's holy.<sup>8</sup>

In ignorance of this principle of mutuality, blinded by prejudice or, perhaps, in spite of knowledge of it, many people, driven by selfish desires and inspired by false hopes, set themselves against that which is right and good and bring upon themselves and all mankind the frustration, defeat and bitter punishment of wrongdoing.

If he is ever to know the depth and height and reality of that life for which he was created man must be changed into a different kind of person with a new sense of the worth of his fellowmen, new desires, new motives, new ways of behaving and a new sense of destiny. He must have a faith which casts out fear, gives courage and strength and hope and love.

#### *Questions:*

1. What is sin? and forgiveness? What does modern psychology have to say at this point?
2. Where does modern man seek his salvation?
3. What is salvation?
4. From what and to what does man need to be saved?
5. Why is man “alienated from God”?
6. In what sense is it true that man was or is impotent to save himself?

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7. Harris Franklin Rall, *A Faith for Today*, p. 153.

8. John Steinbeck, *The Grapes of Wrath*, p. 110.



## STUDY IV.

*Who then shall save? God saves, through Jesus Christ our Lord. "God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son that whosoever believeth on Him should not perish but have everlasting life." This is the heart of the Christian Gospel, the Gospel which we proclaim.*

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IN the Letters of Johanan and Zachaeus, an expansion of the New Testament incident, Zachaeus in reporting his experience with Jesus, to his friend, says, "Strange that I never knew I was lost until I was found." While some may know a kind of longing for a better life, for deeper and more lasting satisfactions, the most of us are content, or confident that circumstances will alter in our favour, the "breaks" will come our way. If disillusioned through experience, we may conclude that "life is like that" and we must take it as it comes making the best we can of it.

The Christian testimony is one of good news, good news to all men. The God who made the world is a God of infinite love towards man, who desires, indeed yearns, to claim man for himself that He may share with him His life; that man was not made for destruction but for life eternal; and that this same God has, in Jesus Christ, made known his will for man and has provided a means whereby man can enter into and fully realize that life, in relationship to God, which means his highest joy and knows no end. That modern Christianity as represented at Madras should point to John 3:16 as the "heart of the Christian gospel" is significant. Here is love—giving love, standing in contrast to greed, indifference to human needs, competitive, hating attitudes which the world practices. To the peoples of the world, oppressing and suffering, God comes to judge, to save, to give.



The following passage from William Adams Brown throws light on the second half of John 3:16, "Who-soever believeth on him should not perish but have everlasting life."

Jesus based his confidence in his own victory over death upon his experience of sonship. It is in this experience of sonship that we find the one sure support of faith in immortality. No less experience gives the individual life dignity and worth enough to warrant the expectation of its endless continuance. The world may perish; God can make other worlds to take its place. But what "other" can take the place of a son in the Father's heart? Here, as always, we turn back to Christ. It is impossible to believe that such a life as his should have gone out in darkness. Our own hope of endless existence is wrapped up with the faith that we too may become like Christ.<sup>9</sup>

Two of the designations used in the Scripture involve difficulty for some people and we must deal with them briefly:

1. Jesus Christ, our Lord.

The designation is itself a kind of affirmation implying personal response, conviction and estimation or evaluation. *Jesus*—the familiar name of the carpenter of Nazareth; *Christ*—a title conferred upon him to indicate the recognition of him as the fulfilment of the prophetic promises of one who should be sent by God to redeem Israel; *our Lord*—the one who is worthy to command and to claim the grateful allegiance of man.

2. His only begotten Son.

This phrase literally means unique or one who is like no other. Thinking of men as children of God it is not difficult to recognize Jesus, as the truly begotten one, most like the Father, obedient to His will and expressing His spirit. In Jesus Christ is "the love of God made manifest."

*Questions:*

1. What is man's part, if any, in his own salvation through Jesus Christ?
2. What is involved in believing on Him?



3. How do you justify the profit motive in the light of the giving love of God?
4. How would you state briefly the Christian gospel?
5. Is belief in immortality essential to the Christian faith?
6. Why do believers in Jesus not perish?
7. What is the original meaning of the word "Gospel?" How did Jesus use it? What are its meanings today?
8. What gives authority to a proclamation?
9. How account for the response of Jews, Greeks, Romans and others to the proclamation of the Apostles?

## STUDY V.

*God in His infinite love has acted for men's salvation. He has come among them in Jesus of Nazareth, His Word made flesh. In Him, He has conquered the power of sin and death. Jesus Christ in His teachings and life of perfect love recalls men to that which God would have them be, and brings them to shame for their betrayal of His expectation. Through His faith and perfect obedience they come to trust the only true God. His suffering and death on Calvary bring them to see the exceeding sinfulness of sin and assure them of God's pardon. His resurrection is the victory of holiness and love over death and corruption. Through his risen and living presence, men who dedicate their wills to Him become with Him partakers of eternal life. In the strength and joy of forgiveness, daily renewed at the foot of the cross, they are made more than conquerors over every evil.*

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GOD has acted for us in the life and death of Jesus to save us from sin in which we all share. What can we learn from the inner life of this Jesus through whom our salvation stands achieved? Through the meagre records, "we can discern the major outlines of a spiritual life that had a certain purpose as its center. His purpose was to follow the will of God, and this purpose in turn rested upon a faith that men are called to be the sons of God, and on an experience of communion with God that realized that sonship. What distinguishes the



religious life of Jesus from that of other great spiritual personalities in history is that this experience of sonship is so completely dominating for the whole of life. The records give us no stories of tension caused by the sense of alienation from God, no times of depression and discouragement because sin has put a barrier between his soul and God. They show Jesus as unique in his realization of unbroken fellowship with God."<sup>10</sup>

We find the sources of Jesus' religious experience in his life of prayer and in his filial relation to God which controlled his attitudes and activities. Jesus' spiritual achievement through the maintenance of constant fellowship with God did not come without discipline and struggle.

The divinity of Jesus was much more an achievement of his religious experience than a native endowment. Moreover, this view of the divineness of Jesus is especially encouraging, since it shows us that some degree of essentially the same sort of achievement is within the range of present possibility for every sincere and aspiring individual who will begin to cultivate the same sort of personal religion.<sup>11</sup>

Christianity is a religion of suffering. The Cross, which adorns the steeples of great buildings, which hangs as a charm from our watch-chains, which warms us with sentimental feelings, was originally the implement of horrible death. And did he not say that his followers must take up their crosses daily? Here is the uniqueness of Christianity and here its strength. "The blood of the martyr is the seed of the Church." The following words of Toyohiko Kagawa bring the Cross to present-day meaning:

In Kobe a young man once came to me and said he wanted to be an evangelist.

"Have you the courage to go to prison?" I asked him.  
"Have you the grit to lead a strike?"

"No," he answered.

"Then give up the idea of becoming an evangelist," I said.

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10. Mary Ely Lyman, *Jesus*, p. 23.

11. D. C. Macintosh, *op. cit.*, p. 120.



It is difficult if not wholly impossible, for us born in the Christian tradition, to imagine ourselves within the experience of pre-Christian or non-Christian people; to understand and appreciate their thoughts, their fears and their longings. Yet, we, too, know the isolation, the loneliness, the defeat—the sense that all is not well for us as individuals nor for society today. And we, also, look for that knowledge of help which will lead us into a better way, a more satisfying life.

In Jesus of Nazareth God communicated Himself in a new and convincing way, in terms intelligible to man, for they were the terms of human living. He is one with other men yet in some way superior, Friend, Master, Holy One of God, Christ, God, Lord! Ultimately, only the highest designation known was appropriate for him. In Him was revealed the truth about God and man, and the relationship of each to the other. The transcendent personality was one with man capable of entering into and sharing his life. God is no longer the stern law-giver, merciless judge, the harsh taskmaster or imperious ruler. He is like Jesus himself.

Bitterness, hate, pride, prestige, pettiness, might, horror, political intrigue, threats—all these were foreign to Jesus and had no power over him. Never did man move with such freedom from fear and such superb personal indifference to the sinister forces of his world. Friendliness, courage, wisdom, originality, insight, creative and healing power—these were the qualities which marked his intercourse with folk. His transparent goodness made the haughty, proud, self-important people of his day so uncomfortable that they could not abide him. He spoiled their world and undermined their security. He must go. So, they heaped scorn upon him and killed him. The more they persecuted and maligned him, the more clear, radiant, beautiful and triumphant was his spirit. They were rid of him and their wrath and resentment



justified in the slow, cruel death of the cross. Thirty pieces of silver, a few garments, a sealed tomb and his enemies going about their accustomed ways! No, this was not the story. He was undefeated. That fire was not quenched; that life was not destroyed. No death could conquer him, nor rock closed cave entomb him. He came forth anew with redeeming power, and men "beheld his glory, as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth."

At long last men had come into the saving knowledge of God and into fellowship with Him who through His grace had claimed them from the bondage of the world, forgiven their sin and called them to share His purposes and His life, giving them power in the face of sin and death.

The revelation of God, so understood means that it belongs eternally to His nature not to be content to direct the world according to His own wise love, heedless of our misunderstanding, or to offer us His fellowship, heedless of our alienation, but that He must seek to overcome, in the freedom of a true reconciliation, our misunderstanding and our alienation. This is the end of all His dealings with us in time, and the task to which He has called all prophetic souls, and which is consummated in the Lord of the prophets, who, being perfectly the Son of God, enables us to be the sons of God, for whom in the fellowship of the Spirit, all things work together for good.<sup>12</sup>

#### *Questions:*

1. What, in Christian experience, has led to the conclusion that in Jesus, God acted on man's behalf for his salvation?
2. What is the relation of the death of Jesus on the cross to our sin in the present day?
3. Why didn't God act sooner or later?
4. Is the power of sin and death any less than before Jesus died?
5. Did Jesus pioneer in this conquest over sin and death or did he complete it?
6. Since "faith and perfect obedience" for Christ meant crucifixion, how can it lead men to trust God?

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12. Oman, *Grace and Personality*, p. 168.



7. How can we attain a filial relationship to God, the Father?
8. What are the possible explanations and interpretations of the resurrection of Jesus?
9. Why do we need forgiveness of our sins every day?
10. What difference does the conception of personality make in the interpretation of the resurrection?
11. What interpretation would you give to "daily renewed at the foot of the Cross?"
12. "More than conquerors"—in what sense can one be more than a conqueror over evil?

## STUDY VI.

*For Christ, the Kingdom of God was central. He called His followers to seek first God's Kingdom and His righteousness. Through acceptance of His call to suffering love and through trust in divine help, men are summoned to be co-workers with Him for the increase of justice, truth and brotherhood upon earth. His Kingdom is both within and beyond the world. It will be consummated in the final establishment of His glorious reign of love and righteousness, when there shall be a new heaven and a new earth where death and sin shall be no more.*

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IN Jesus' own experience, God is father, and he commends to all persons, potentially sons of God, this relationship which he has claimed and proved. When people enter into the sonship, they act as members of the Kingdom of God. This Kingdom means the righteous rule of God. "It is this righteous sovereignty of God that calls out our trust in him and allows us to think of him as Father. It is this righteous rule of God that compels our thought of all men as potentially God's sons, and hence as brothers of one another."<sup>13</sup>

It is interesting to note the references made by Jesus to the Kingdom of God, in the one prayer which he taught his disciples. The prayer begins with a petition that God's Kingdom may come and his will be done in earth as much as in heaven and ends by commending

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13. Mary Ely Lyman, *Jesus*, p. 15.



our petitions on the ground it is God's Kingdom with which we are concerned. What is this Kingdom like or what will the world be like when it comes? We make no progress toward the Kingdom if we simply picture it as a Christian society from which the wicked and undesirable are excluded. Jesus did not live in that kind of a society. The Kingdom was founded, its principles laid down, and its whole method determined by the conditions of the world that we know. In the first place, the economic structure of the Kingdom will be one which will insist upon the responsibility of the individual to the community and the responsibility of the community for the individual. The Christian State must express this principle in its organization and in the general governing conditions of the community life.

The Christian nation "will choose rather to perish than to stain its soul by the passion of war. Nor do I believe there will be any hope of international civilisation until some nation has done this. Of course, such a choice must be the act of the whole people and not of a government resting on a precarious majority; and, in that sense justified so far as concerns those who technically declare them and those who fight in them."<sup>14</sup>

Understanding the Christian faith depends on knowledge of the Jesus of the Gospels, the Christ of the New Testament. The whole body of literature testifies to that which God has done in and through Christ for man. Matthew, Mark and Luke (the so-called Synoptic Gospels) give the most intimate account of the life and teaching of the Master for whom the Kingdom of God is central, the *summum bonum* in relation to which all other goods are secondary and for which a man will give "all that he hath."

It is clear that the Kingdom is not to be confused with a political order in this world and yet it is surely related

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14. William Temple, *The Kingdom of God*, p. 82-83.

to the ordinary life and welfare of persons. Jesus talks about it in terms of the natural order, the daily occupations of men and of sacrifice or self-giving. Perhaps we could think of the Kingdom as God's "sphere of influence" in this world. Thus, "advancing the Kingdom" comes to mean not simply increasing the number of individuals assenting to its merits, but increasing its effectiveness in redirecting human life. Then the Kingdom has two types of bounds. First, it has numerical or geographical bounds; that is, it is limited by the number of persons committed to the will of God. Second, it is limited to those areas of life into which man has allowed the ways of God to penetrate. For some individuals and groups the Kingdom is of purely intellectual or academic interest; for others, having infinite possibilities for application to practical life, it modifies and determines actual behavior.

As demonstrated by Jesus in his own life, the Kingdom of God is man's objective and it determines his program, his method and is the source of his dynamic. In Jesus the Kingdom of God was real, effective, victorious and his self-less life of service to mankind is laid upon those who share with him the fellowship of the Father. The final redemption of all men and society and the establishment of the Kingdom of God is the objective which becomes normative for all followers of Christ in the world.

"Nothing in the Gospels stands out more clearly than the eagerness of Jesus to win individuals. 'Follow *thou* me,' and he always insisted that in the last resort a man's attitude to God rested on his own individual choice, and was his own individual responsibility. That was a decision which no other could make for him. 'Except a man say *no* to himself, he cannot be my disciple.' No crowd decision, no mass movement, could do that for a man."<sup>15</sup>

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15. B. C. Plowright, *Rebel Religion*, p. 72.



Jesus taught them in parables saying, "The kingdom of heaven is likened unto a man that sowed good seed in his field"; "The kingdom of heaven is like unto a grain of mustard seed"; "The kingdom of heaven is like unto leaven, which a woman took, and hid in three measures of meal, till it was all leavened"; "The kingdom of heaven is like unto a treasure hidden in the field"; "The kingdom of heaven is like unto a man that is a merchant seeking goodly pearls: and having found one pearl of great price, he went and sold all that he had, and bought it." "Again the kingdom of heaven is like unto a net, that was cast into the sea, and gathered of every kind."<sup>16</sup> "Is the lamp brought to be put under the bushel?"<sup>17</sup> "The kingdom of God cometh not with observation: neither shall they say, Lo, here! or, There! for lo, the kingdom of God is within you."<sup>18</sup>

If love should count you worthy, and should deign  
 One day to seek your door and be your guest  
 Pause! ere you draw the bolt and bid him rest,  
 If in your old content you would remain;  
 For not alone he enters; in his train  
 Are angels of the mist, the lonely guest  
 Dreams of the unfilled and unpossessed,  
 And sorrow, and Life's immemorial pain.  
 He wakes desires you never may forget,  
 He shows you stars you never saw before,  
 He makes you share with him, for evermore,  
 The burden of the world's divine regret.  
 How wise you were to open not! and yet,  
 How poor if you should turn him from the door!<sup>19</sup>

### Questions:

1. What is meant by saying that the Kingdom of God was central for Jesus?
2. Restate the saying "Seek first the Kingdom of God."
3. What are the fruits or evidences of the Kingdom in the world?
4. How can one share "the burden of the world's divine regret?"
5. Why or in what sense does the Christian think of or look for "a new heaven and a new earth?"

16. Matthew 13:24; 31; 33; 44; 45; 47.

17. Mark 4:21.

18. Luke 17:20.

19. S. R. Lysaght, *Poems of the Unknown Way*. Macmillan.

## STUDY VII.

*To the gift of Christ, God has added the gift of His Holy Spirit in the Church. Christ's true church is the fellowship of those whom God has called out of darkness into His marvelous light. The guidance and power of the Spirit are given to this Church that it may continue Christ's saving work in the world. It seeks to build up its own members in the knowledge of Christ, challenging them anew with the message of His redeeming love, comforting them with the assurance of God's forgiveness in Him, teaching them the way of love through service for their brethren in Christ.*

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THE New Testament is the memorial of a community of people who knew themselves under an infinite indebtedness to Christ and who, out of that sense, found themselves exposed to the moulding and shaping pressure of the purposes of God Himself. That is what is meant by the world of the Spirit. Christ has come back, is being rediscovered in a new way and is rediscovering men. The Spirit of the Lord, the mind of God, the life that was in Christ Jesus, the Holy Spirit—these are the designations of that persuasion, that power which laid hold upon men and touched the fundamental springs of his nature in a radical way. The Church arose out of that sense of common indebtedness to God in Christ. The individual was now one with those who shared the experience of Christ, no longer in isolation. The Church was necessary both for the continued existence of the "believer" and for his development as a spiritual creation. The history of the Christian Church is incontrovertible evidence of the dynamic power which was in the lives of the disciples and early apostles, and which is still at work in the world.

Now, what kind of thing is there which so far as we know does really draw man out from his self-centeredness? We know quite well that the thing which really does shake us from the center of ourselves is the discovery that there is someone so loving us as to suffer for us, to whom we



have been giving little thought. That does shame us and draw us away from self-centeredness.

That has happened to most of us in human relationships; but if we are to be altogether delivered from self-centeredness, we must be led not only to love the few people whom we have found loving us (so that, after all, though it is no longer myself that is central, it is still *my* circle, *my* friends, *my* family, *my* country, *my* something or other) but also to love those who do not love us. Then what becomes necessary is that One who is the center for all the world and all mankind, whose love shuts out nothing at all (so that when I understand it I must also know that it goes to all others as truly as to me) should have suffered for me because of that love; then as the heart is drawn out towards him, it is no longer towards *my* God, but towards God whose I am. He does not belong to me, but I and all others belong to him; and in so far as love really touches our hearts, we are delivered from self-centeredness and "translated" (to use St. Paul's word) into that kingdom of the Son of God where love is the principle that binds all together. What is needed is the sacrifice of God. That is the Cross. That is what it has meant down all the ages to those who have found there the power that changes life.<sup>20</sup>

The primary task of the Church, the fellowship of those who are bound together in love for all people, is to make known the revelation of God in the gospel of Jesus Christ and to bring that gospel into intelligible and creative relations with man and society. The manifold divisions of organized Christianity make it necessary for us to think and speak in terms of the Churches rather than the Church and remind us that God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, is still limited and hindered by human frailty and human sin even amongst those whose allegiance and service He has claimed.

In *Days of Our Years*, Van Paassen calls us to meet the needs of the world today with and through the Church:

The Church must become again, what its Master called it to be, a ferment in society, the salt of the earth, a conscious, rational, responsible, human force of action in the service of the coming day, the new man, and the society of the future. In other words, the Church must cut the Gospel loose from the ways and things of "this world" which it was commanded to overcome, and bring back from

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20. *Students and the Christian World Mission*, Indianapolis Convention of 1936. William Temple, "The Cross of Christ and the Need of the World," pages 49-50.

heaven, where a spirit of lassitude and compromise has relegated it, the immense and ultimate hope of mankind, which is the establishment of the Kingdom of God on this earth and in our time.<sup>21</sup>

### Questions:

1. In the last study we considered how the religion of the Cross is one of suffering. Yet those who embrace it are spoken of as entering into a marvelous light. "He that seeketh his life shall lose it and he that loseth his life shall find it." What is the meaning of this paradox?
2. The Greeks consulted the oracle at Delphi, our ancestors knelt in prayer, but we, the enlightened and civilized of today, flip a coin in the face of major decisions. We may speak in our statement of faith of the "guidance and power of the Spirit" given to the Church, yet in our personal lives and even as Christian groups we ignore the possibility of being led. In what ways may we become aware of God's will for us?
3. What is meant by the gift of Christ?
4. In what sense is the Holy Spirit an additional gift?
5. Is it to be expected that the community of "light" will distinguish itself from the community of "darkness" or from other communities in the world? If so, in what way?
6. Why should "redeemed" men need to be challenged "anew" and comforted "with the assurance of God's forgiveness?"
7. Would you say "*for* their brethren in Christ" or *with* their brethren in Christ?
8. What do you think to be the function of the Church in the world?

## STUDY VIII.

*For those that are without Christ the true Church yearns with the love of its Master and Lord. It goes forth to them with the evangel of His grace. It practices His ministry of compassion and healing. It bears witness against every iniquity and injustice in their common life. It bears their sorrows and heartache on its prayers. To it is given the solemn privilege of entering into the fellowship of the sufferings of Christ.*

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21. Pierre Van Paassen, *Days of our Years*, p. 419.



THE above paragraph is intended neither as a report of achievement nor even of progress. It is part of a statement of faith and as such expresses the guiding principle, the aim and intention of the Church and its members. Yet viewed in the long perspective of history it is true that these things have characterized Christianity when it has been most true to its founder and most expressive of His spirit. The Church—like that highly sensitized instrument of modern times, the electric eye, which magically opens the door for the waiter, porter or automobile—has continually sensed human need and has met it, over and over again in the face of seemingly impossible odds.

A noted Hindu educationist addressing a gathering of Christian missionary leaders expressed his thought in words like these: "Christianity has been for us of India a bright light which has revealed to us not only our errors, failures, shortcomings, but also our possibilities, that which we might be, as a people and as a nation. Moreover, it has taught us how we may achieve that high goal, how the possible may become the actual, the potential, the real." Knowledge of oneself, vision, newness of life, courage, hope, power—this is the experience oft repeated by individuals and peoples through the centuries.

The ideal for the future of the race upon earth includes many elements, such as the advancement of science and culture; biological and hygienic well-being, based upon scientific eugenics and sanitation; economic welfare, including the elimination of extreme poverty and probably also of extreme wealth in the hands of individuals; a maximum of co-operation with only the minimum of competition which is necessary as a stimulus to efficiency; industrial peace based upon righteous relations between capital and labor; international peace based upon righteous international relations and adequate world-government; also a "moral equivalent for war." These and kindred ideals, however, can be guaranteed as to be realized in large measure within a reasonable time, only if, in addition to the enlightenment of science and the pressure of biological necessity, recourse is constantly had to an essentially Christian individual and social morality, which, in turn, can be adequately guaranteed only by the cultivation of

an essentially Christian type of experimental religion. In other words, only an increased revelation, or presence of God on earth ruling in the wills and lives of men, can bring in the fulness of "heaven on earth." And as the social instrument whose function it is to facilitate the realization of this ideal, we have the church by its efficiency in propagating the type of experimental religion which is most dynamically related as means to the kingdom of God on earth as end.<sup>22</sup>

"Go ye into all the world and preach the gospel to the whole creation."<sup>23</sup> Such was the great commission laid upon and assumed by the disciples of Christ and from the first century to the present the Church has been engaged in that stupendous undertaking. Stupendous because it meant not only proclaiming by word of mouth the facts of Christian experience, but giving expression to that experience, in personal and social action, carrying forward in every age and amongst all people the work which Jesus himself had begun. The contribution of Jesus to human welfare provided the foundation and the norm for Christian endeavor. He had the true social ideal of the brotherhood of men under the fatherhood of God. He offered the true moral example of fidelity and refusal to compromise; the true religious example of a right attitude toward God the Father, gaining His own religious experience thereby—becoming the highest individual revelation of God and the author of man's faith in that through him there was made available to man that salvation, freedom and power of which we spoke previously.

The Church insists that the love of God and his beneficial purpose are basic realities that God not only revealed Himself in the person of Jesus Christ, but also that Jesus in His life and teaching gave an example of what man might be; that in His crucifixion He showed not only the gravity of sin but the length to which love will go in forgiveness and in overcoming evil; that persons of every race are equally valuable before God; that men should love their neighbours as themselves; that they can unite in a fellowship in which they can fully realize themselves and discover all the meanings God has for them individually and socially.<sup>24</sup>

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22. Douglas Clyde MacIntosh, *Theology as an Empirical Science*, pp. 213-214.

23. Mark 16:15.

24. George Stewart, *The Church*, p. 18.



Over a half-century ago a movement began, which swept through the student circles of North America bearing the challenging purpose of **THE EVANGELIZATION OF THE WORLD IN THIS GENERATION**. The missionary spirit, dating all the way back to Jesus' commission to His disciples, was set aflame again, and many thousands of young Americans crossed the oceans and penetrated deep into the little known interiors of Africa, Asia, and South America. If their purpose was to make the name of Jesus known in all parts of the globe, they succeeded. Speaking in broad terms, Jesus is universally known. But the missionary task of which this paragraph speaks is barely begun. Just as the tyrannic *conquistadores* followed the humble Jesuit missionaries into the remote corners of New Spain, so for every Western missionary there has gone out a great number of Western oppressors, greedy for gold, gasoline, and timber, sowing the seed of mechanized hatred where the evangel is trying to grow. So the name of Jesus is shouted in blasphemy from the mouths of white slave-drivers to the ears of beaten, bleeding browns and blacks and yellows. The "Christian" nations fly at each other's throats in orgies of bestial massacre. The "Christian" white men fill their pockets with riches bought with the bread and sweat of oppressed peoples. Today, the true Church cries again for young men and women to dare to push the frontiers of the Kingdom, not only over the peaks of the Andes and the Himalayas, but into the practice of industry and politics, into the hearts of both Occidentals and Orientals, to break the insane hypocrisy of "Christ-knowing" peoples.

No longer is the Church in America divided into two groups—missionaries and those who support them. No longer can a student choose a life of ease, soothing his conscience by giving his wealth to missionaries. Our part in the missionary movement is to put the ways of Jesus into practice in our own establishment or community—fairness to the worker, relief to the suffering, coopera-



tion instead of competition, the eradication of class hatred, race prejudice and war. If we are Christians, we must be missionary.

*Questions:*

1. Who are "those without Christ?"
2. In what other ways could the second statement, "It goes forth to them with the evangel of His grace," be expressed?
3. What limitations are placed upon the disciples of Christ in their "going forth?"
4. What distinction is there between *witness* and *prayer*?
5. How can the "fellowship of suffering" be counted a privilege and would anyone seek it as such?

## STUDY IX.

*In spite of all the weakness and shortcomings of our churches, Christ's true Church is within them; and our hope for the redemption of mankind centers in His work through them. Through the nurture and discipline of the Church, Christian life comes to completion; in glad service within the fellowship of the Church, Christian devotion is perfected.*

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<sup>66</sup>THE Church derives its life from Jesus Christ and thereby its essential unity. Although we have the early churches of the East, such as the Armenians, Nestorians and Assyrians, the many branches of the Orthodox Church, the Roman Church, and the denominations of the Protestant world, the Church is still one in the deepest spiritual sense in that all parts of it acknowledge Jesus as Lord. Christ is the Head of all of them. However we may divide ourselves, however much we may fall short of the intelligence, goodness, and spiritual grandeur of Christ, he makes our unity, he is our one justification for existence as a corporate fellowship. From Christ comes everything that is abiding in the Church. He is the true life of the tiniest parish in the Lebanon Mountains, Yokohama, Melbourne, Paris or Tanganyika. White, brown, yellow, black and red members of scores of sects and denominations derive their faith,



their spiritual life from Him. Our unity in Him is so much greater than our divergences of color, class, culture or ecclesiastical outlook, that closer faith, order, life and work wait only for the understanding of this unity and courage to give expression to it."<sup>25</sup>

The distinction between the true Church and the visible organized Christian community is a real one and there must ever be a tension between the two, for the former bears upon the latter in judgment and disapproval for its inadequacy, its hypocrisy and its failure. Amos told the people that God did not want their burnt offerings; he prefers justice and righteousness toward the oppressed. Hosea and Isaiah denounced the calloused self-indulgence of the people in their religious feasts and other practices. John the Baptist called the people to repent, for the kingdom is at hand. Jesus declared that the Sabbath was made for man and not man for the Sabbath, which fact greatly annoyed those who believed their salvation lay in obeying the Law. Jesus did not stop with this declaration, but dared to heal a man and to pluck food on the Sabbath, which called forth indignant protests from the outraged holy ones.

Like the early Christians we say, "We cannot really live as Jesus did or even as he instructed his disciples to do. This world in which we live is a real world; we have bodies and we must eat. Surely, Jesus did not expect us to believe those things he said about the lilies and sparrows and the pearl of great price." However, the Church conserves the teachings of the prophet after he is dead or has been killed by the people who refused to accept him and his message. Because the Church is inclusive, it falls into the hands of some who do not value its boundaries except for their own purposes. We must remember that this Church nurtures the very prophets who speak to it in ringing tones of a loving, righteous God, pleading for the love of His children.

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25. George Stewart, *The Church*, p. 53.



The Church like the Kingdom of God finds only partial expression in the lives of men and in the forms and patterns of human society. It is not given to us, at any particular time in history, to know what the perfect ultimate expression will be, for it is of God and eternity, but we know that as we advance in knowledge and obedience we shall realize more fully that fellowship of life which is the true Church of God.

One of the writers of this study visited a Negro church in the South where the evangelist made the following striking comment about the Church:

Some of you say that because they's hypocrites and sinners in the Church you don' join it. I ain't denyin' that they do be some bad sinners in the Church, but they's more sinners in the club and the picture show that you go to, and the Church has got the only way to salvation. If you was in the ocean drownin' and they was one boat there, if the devil hisself was in that boat you'd git in it.

The Madras Conference and, more recently, the World Conference of Christian Youth held at Amsterdam in the summer of 1939, are evidences of the notable advances towards the mutual understanding of the widely variant types of Christian communions, and give promise of healing, enrichment and strength to the visible Church.

*Questions:*

1. What is this "true Church" (often spoken of as The Church), which exists within the imperfect churches?
2. What characterizes a member of Christ's true Church?
3. Can a person not belonging to an organized church belong to the true Church?
4. What is the value of membership in a church?
5. In what way does the work of the true Church differ from Christ's work?
6. What other agency in the world can the true Church claim and use than the organized churches?
7. How does the church nurture Christian life and what is the nature of its discipline?
8. When is Christian devotion perfected?
9. The Church is world-wide and is one. What would be the practical results for our churches if the implications of this statement were accepted and taken seriously?



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